

Vol 24, n. 4 (2003) Thematic Section: Kari Polanyi Levitt.

Kari Polanyi Levitt: Contributions to Development Studies

Introduction

Barry Myers, St. Paul University

“A particular characteristic of our honouree is that she brings to her subject matter a rich background of experiences that cut across cultures. And, if that were not enough, she expanded the geographic boundaries of her interest and work to incorporate the Caribbean. As readers will note, three of the four papers focus on the Caribbean as her laboratory. And, typical of Kari Polanyi Levitt, if development is supposed to be restricted to poor countries, she will have none of it. Her world is all of what exists. Her forte will not be limited to so-called ‘international’ development of poor countries. (That label begs the question of how to identify the work of the development specialist who is a native of a developing country working at home.) Rich countries also have development problems. And so, Canada, a rich country with problems of development, is the subject of the fourth article. Kari Polanyi Levitt is no shrinking violet on the subject of Canada’s development ...”

Debt, Adjustment, and Development: Looking to the 1990s

Eric Williams Memorial Lecture (1990)

Kari Polanyi Levitt, McGill University

“In this paper, I propose to share some thoughts about the transformation of the international economic order that we are witnessing today, and the challenge that these developments present to Third World countries in general, and the Caribbean in particular. The last time I visited [the Central Bank of Trinidad and Tobago] I was asked to look at the microcosm of a specific statistical problem pertaining to the relations of this country with the IMF. For the past two months, I have been engaged in a detailed study of indebtedness and structural adjustment in Jamaica, and I will draw on this study

later in this lecture by way of illustration. But in this paper I want to look at the macrocosm, beginning with a brief historical look at the changes in the international political economy, in order to gain a wider perspective on debt, adjustment, and development ... ”

The Right to Development

Sir Arthur Lewis Memorial Lecture (2000)

Kari Polanyi Levitt, McGill University

“I have chosen ‘The Right to Development’ as the theme of this lecture [and paper] because it was central to the life and work of Arthur Lewis, and because “globalization” has in many respects put development in suspense — if not regression. Developing countries are without effective voice in the making and the implementation of the rules governing the global economy. The right to development has been subordinated to the rights of investors; fortified by the trade-enforceable regime of the WTO, and an ever-growing list of economic and political conditionalities attached to official development finance. The new rules governing trade, investment, and property rights are increasingly invasive, requiring institutional “reforms” that transgress the sovereignty of developing countries, and seriously constrain policy autonomy to determine domestic social and economic priorities ... ”

Development in Question: What Have We Learned about Development?

Keynote Address, Canadian Association for the Study of International Development Congress (2000)

Kari Polanyi Levitt, McGill University

“Perhaps the most important thing I have learned about ‘development’ is the role of ideas in defining the limits of the possible, and the role of the powerful in the production and dissemination of these ideas. In the euphoria that greeted the victory of the ‘free world’ over communism, ‘globalization’ was heralded as an opportunity, which promises ‘enormous gains’ to ‘winners’ who undertake radical liberalization of their domestic economies. Official reports of the World Bank greeted ‘globalization’ as a return to a ‘Golden Age’ of 1870–1914 when capital was free to roam the world in search of gain. The authors of these reports forgot to mention that 1870–1914 was the classic era of colonialism and imperialism, or that it terminated in a major World War, a Revolution in Russia, the Great Depression of the 1930s, the Second World War, and Communism in China — in three brief decades ... ”

Silent Surrender, Preface to the Carleton Library Series Edition (2001)

Kari Polanyi Levitt, McGill University

“My remarks here constitute a preface to the republication of my book, *Silent Surrender*, by McGill-Queen’s University Press in 2001. The book is an early case study of the effects of foreign direct investment on Canada, a ‘hinterland’ with a historical legacy of economic dependence. At the core of the book is a carefully documented analysis of the modern multinational corporation and the strategic considerations that drive it to capture ever more spaces, real and virtual, private and public, domestic and global. In the thirty years that have passed since this book was written, the power of these private economic entities has grown, while the fiscal resources of the state to redistribute the gains from

growth have declined. Increasingly, corporations are defining the ‘public interest’ and governments are engaging in international agreements that grant foreign investors privileges that take precedence over the public control of national resources ... ”

Articles

The Face of Neo-Liberalism in the Third World: Landscapes of Coping in Trinidad and Tobago

Barry Riddell, Queen’s University

With global incorporation, the face of the Third World is being reshaped. This investigation focuses on the alternations caused by neo-liberal globalization and asks “How and why are the geographical landscapes of the Third World being remoulded?” Based on research conducted in the Caribbean nation of Trinidad and Tobago, involving a household survey of economically-stressed neighbourhoods and an examination of national newspaper content, the investigation employs these private and public voices, along with participant observation, in order to uncover the survival tactics employed by the country’s citizens. These coping strategies have altered the face of the nation. This revised landscape reflects the blending of the legacy of the recent past with the modifications resulting from efforts to survive in the new economy. Underlying the investigation is the quest to give economic, political, and human events unfolding in the Third World a geographical expression—thus linking pattern and process, as the face of the nation is reshaped by survival strategies into the “landscapes of coping.”

The Peace of the Oligarchs: Land Distribution and the Guatemalan Peace Process

Simon Helweg-Larsen, BA, Saint Mary’s University

Land ownership and usage has long been the pivotal factor in Guatemalan economic and social development and is at the heart of the country’s recent armed conflict and current poverty and inequality. Although land reform was central in the 1996 un-brokered peace agreements, few substantial changes have resulted, and the majority of agreements remain stalled. After describing the current situation in detail, this paper investigates the events and parties responsible for the non-realization of land reform. Finally, a strategy is suggested for minimal reform in the face of strong opposition.

State of the Art

Le Modèle de développement intégré : vers une harmonisation des orientations stratégiques de l’aide au développement

Pascale Hatcher, MA, Université du Québec à Montréal

With the objective to make international aid more efficient, the Integrated Development Model of the International Financial Institutions, demands the reform of all the mechanisms of development. The purpose of this article is to identify certain implications derived from harmonizing the strategic orientations of the international development community. We shall demonstrate that this reform, under the commendable pretense of reducing poverty, promotes a harmonization of development practices to allow a greater strategic selectivity. An analysis of this selectivity permits us to revisit the strategies promoted by the idm and to observe that they are highly political.

Reviews

The Human Factor in Shaping the Course of History and Development, Senyo B.-S.K. Adjibolosoo

(ed.)

Caroline Manion, Saint Mary's University

Development Hegemony: NGOs and the State in India, Sangeeta Kamat

Dip Kapoor, McGill University

State of the World 2003 The Worldwatch Institute

Pablo S. Bose, York University

The Least Developed Countries Report 2002: Escaping the Poverty Trap, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

Roy Culpeper, The North-South Institute